

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 ALGIERS 0558

NODIS

PARIS FOR AMBASSADOR PARKER ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AG, US

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE

1. SUMMARY. BOUMEDIENE RECEIVES ROBINSON AND ATHERTON FOR TWO AND ONE-HALF HOURS. FIRST HALF DEVOTED TO SAHARA AND MIDDLE EAST. LAST HOUR TO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. IN RAMBLING DISCOURSE BOUMEDIENE GIVES CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS ABOUT EFFECT OF SAHARAN CONFLICT ON OUR RELATIONS. ON ONE HAND HE WARNS THAT WE MUST TAKE CONSEQUENCES OF FAVORING MOROCCO. ON THE OTHER HE SAYS HE WILL INITIATE NO CHANGES IN OUR RELATIONS. HE ALSO MAKES STATEMENT WHICH SEEMS CLEARLY TO SAY ALGERIA HAS NOT JOINED REJECTIONIST FRONT, AND IMPLICATION IS IT WILL NOT DO SO. ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, LIKE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND ENERGY ABDESSELAM, BOUMEDIENE DODGES QUESTION REGARDING SECURITY ALGERIAN SUPPLY. THAT EXCHANGE IS REPORTED IN FOLLOWIN TELEGRAM.

2. FOLLOWING IS REPORT ROBINSON/ATHERTON CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE MARCH 1. AFTER PLEASANTRIES ROBINSON SAID HE WAS VERY PLEASED TO HAVE THIS OPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON A WIDE RANGE OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS. HE BROUGHT WARM REGARDS FROM PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER, BOTH OF WHOM ESTEEMED AND APPRECIATED THE IMPORTANT ROLE PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE PLAYED. ROBINSON THOUGHT COOPERA-

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TION BETWEEN US HAD SHOWN MUCH PROGRESS IN ECONOMIC FIELDS

SINCE THE FIRST TIME THEY HAD MET. HE HOPED HE WOULD HAVE A CHANCE TO DISCUSS SOME IMPORTANT ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL ISSUES WHICH WE WOULD HAVE BEFORE US IN THE MONTHS TO COME. FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH BOUTEFILKA IN PARIS, HOWEVER, HE WAS ALSO AWARE OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN POLITICAL MATERS AND ATHERTON WAS HERE BECAUSE OF HIS MORE DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS. SINCE ATHERTON WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE EARLY TO CATCH A PLANE FOR RABAT, WE WOULD START WITH POLITICAL QUESTIONS. THE PRESIDENT AGREED.

3. ATHERTON SAID IT WAS A GREAT HONOR TO SEE BOUMEDIENE AGAIN. HE HAD BEEN HERE ONLY FIVE MONTHS AGO AND AS HE HAD DONE LAST TIME HE WOULD LIKE TO READ FROM HIS NOTES REGARDING INSTRUCTIONS SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD GIVEN HIM IN ORDER TO

MAKE CERTAIN THAT HE TRANSMITTED THE MESSAGE ACCURATELY. UNLIKE MR. ROBINSON, HE COULDN'T TALK WITHOUT NOTES. THE PRESIDENT SMILED AND COMMENTED IT WAS BECAUSE ECONOMIC RELATION WERE GOOD. HE DID NOT KNOW IF HE COULD SAY THE SAME ABOUT POLITICAL RELATIONS.

4. ATHERTON SAID THE SECRETARY SENT HIS WARM PERSONAL REGARDS, AND BECAUSE OF HIS HIGH REGARD FOR BOUMEDIENE'S LEADERSHIP WAS CONCERNED THAT THERE CONTINUE TO BE A FULL MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S CONCERNS AND POLICIES IN BOTH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AREAS. TH THAT END HE HAD FOR THE PRESIDENT A LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY, WHICH HE PROCEEDED TO HAND OVER. BOUMEDIENE READ THE LETTER WITHOUT COMMENT AND ASKED ATHERTON TO CONTINUE.

5. ATHERTON SAID THAT HE WISHED TO MAKE TWO PRELIMINARY COMMENTS. FIRST, WE HAD NOTED STATEMENTS IN ALGERIAN PRESS THAT U.S. POLICIES TOWARD MOROCCO WERE PART OF AN IMPERIALIST CONSPIRACY AGAINST ALGERIAN REVOLUTION. HE COULD ASSURE BOUMEDIENE THAT NOTHING WAS FURTHER FROM TRUTH. WHILE WE DID NOT AGREE WITH CERTAIN IDEOLOGICAL POSITIONS, WE HAS GREAT RESPECT FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE AND FOR THE EFFORTS OF ALGERIAN PEOPLE. HE SAW NO REASON WHY WE COULD NOT CONTINUE TO HAVE FRUITFUL AND COOPERATION.

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TIVE RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF ALGERIA SUCH AS WE HAD TODAY. WHERE WE HAD DIFFERENCES WE WOULD PREFER TO DEAL WITH THEM THROUGH DIALOGUE AND FRIENDSHIP, NOT CONFRONTATION. THE TRUE TEST OF FRIENDSHIP WAS THAT ONE COULD HAVE DIFFERENCES AND STILL BE FRIENDS, EMPHASIZING AND REINFORCING WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON RATHER THAN DIFFERENCES.

6. SECONDLY, SECRETARY WANTED TO BE SURE THERE WAS NO MISUNDERSTANDING OF OBJECTIVES THE U.S. WAS PURSUING IN MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA IN THIS CRUCIAL PERIOD. MIDDLE EAST SITUATION CONTINUED TO HAVE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS. THERE HAD BEEN A NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS REGARD SINCE LAST OCTOBER AND THE SECRETARY WANTED HIM TO SHARE IN HIS ASSESSMENT AND ASKED IN TURN THAT ATHERTON CONVEY PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE'S VIEWS BACK TO HIM. WOULD THE PRESIDENT PREFER TO START WITH THE MIDDLE EAST OR SAHARA? BOUMEDIENE SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO START WITH SAHARA.

7. ATHERTON SAID SECRETARY WANTED PRESIDENT TO KNOW THAT HE WOULD VERY MUCH REGRET IT IF THE SAHARA PROBLEM ADVERSELY AFFECTED U.S.- ALGERIAN RELATIONS. WHETHER THINGS TAKE THIS COURSE DID NOT DEPEND ENTIRELY OR EVEN MAINLY ON THE U.S. WE HAD FOUGHT TO AVOID DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN QUESTION AND HAD ALWAYS RECOGNIZED IT CONTAINED POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE BOTH WITHIN THE REGION AND FOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR FRIENDS IN THE REGION. OF COURSE WE WERE AWARE OF DANGERS THAT COULD BE CAUSED BY CONFRONTATION. WE HAD STRONGLY URGED KING HASSAN NOT TO UNDERTAKE THE GREEN MARCH. WE HAD SUPPORTED ALL UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR THE MARCHERS TO BE WITHDRAWN.

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8. THE U.S. HAD ALSO PLAYED NO ROLE IN NEGOTIATION OF NOV. 14 TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. SPAIN SIGNED AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA FOR ITS OWN REASONS. THE ASSERTION THAT SPAIN ACCEPTED UNDER U.S. PRESSURE WAS TOTALLY WITHOUT BASIS IN FACT. IT WAS TRUE WE HAD ALWAYS URGED A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION BUT WITHOUT TAKING A POSITION ON WHAT THE NATURE OF THAT SOLUTION SHOULD BE. WE WERE NOT CONSULTED ABOUT THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH WE KNEW NEGOTIATIONS WERE IN PROGRESS, WE DID NOT KNOW THE CONTENTS OF THE AGREEMENT UNTIL AFTER IT WAS CONCLUDED. AS WE SAW IT, ANY PRESSURE SPAIN FELT CAME FROM MOROCCAN MARCH AND OUR INABILITY TO PERSUADE THE MOROCCANS NOT TO UNDERTAKE IT.

9. IN LIGHT OF PSIAN'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM SAHARA, WE WERE FACED WITH ONE OF THOSE PROBLEMS WITH NO IDEAL SOLUTION. WE DID BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE AN EFFORT TO LEARN WISHES OF SAHARAN PEOPLE. OUR VOTES AT THE UN REFLECTED THAT BELIEF AND WE HAD INDICATED AS MUCH TO KING HASSAN.

10. WE NOW FACED SITUATION IN WHICH MOROCCO DEEPLY INVOLVED INSAHARA. IT WAS OUR JUDGEMENT MOROCCAN PRESENCE IN SAHARA WAS REALITY THAT COULD BE REVERSED ONLY THROUGH LARGE SCALE WARFARE WHICH COULD HAVE ONLY THE MOST TRAGIC OF CONSEQUENCES. THEREFORE, WE FOLLOWED THE SITUATION WITH INTEREST AND HOPED THAT THE EFFORTS OF THE LEADERS IN THE
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REGION AND THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL TO FIND A SOLUTION WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL. THE RESULTS SO FAR HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTING BUT WE CONTINUED TO BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL REQUIRED THAT A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION BE FOUND. WE WERE MAKING THE SAME POINT TO KING HASSAN BUT DID NOT WANT TO CREATE ANY MISUNDERSTANDING. ATHERTON DID NOT CARRY ANY PROPOSALS AND WAS NOT SEEKING ROLE OF MEDIATOR.

11. ATHERTON CONTINUED, SAYING HE WISHED TO RAISE IN A SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING A SENSITIVE SUBJECT AND THIS WAS THE QUESTION OF OUR ARMS RELATIONSHIP WITH MOROCCO. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE ALGERIANS HAD CAUSE FOR CONCERN IN THIS RESPECT. U.S. HAD NO DESIRE OR INTENTION TO CREATE A MILITARY CONFRONTATION. OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO MOROCCO WOULD NOT CHANGE MILITARY BALANCE EVEN IF ALGERIA GOT NO MORE ARMS, WHICH WAS NOT THE CASE. UNFORTUNATELY IT WAS A FACT OF LIFE THAT ALL NATIONS WILL SEEK AND RECEIVE MILITAR WEAPONS FROM ONE SOURCE OR ANOTHER. WE MUST BE FRANK AND SAY OUR PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE WOULD CONTINUE, BUT PRESS AND OTHER REPORTS GREATLY EXAGGERATED ITS SIZE. WHEN WE SAID IT WOULD CONTINUE WE WERE TALKING ABOUT COMMITMENTS TO MOROCCO WHICH DATED FROM SOME TWO YEARS OR MORE BEFORE.

12. ANOTHER OF THE DANGERS OF PRESENT SITUATION WAS RISK OF INTERNATIONALIZATION WHICH WAS NOT IN THE INTERESTS OF ANYONE. WE DID NOT WISH TO IMPLY WE THOUGHT THIS HAD HAPPENED. WE CERTAINLY DID NOT WANT TO SEE INTERNATIONALIZATION. WE WOULD NOT INITIATE ANY STEPS WHICH COULD LEAD TO SUCH A DEVELOPMENT. WE WOULD BE PARTICULARLY DISTRESSED BY THE DANGERS SUCH A DEVELOPMENT COULD CAUSE TO OUR VALUED RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA.

13. AS MR. ROBINSON HAD SAID, WE WERE PLEASED WITH THE DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR ECONOMIC RELATIONS. OUR BIG CONCERN WAS THAT THE SAHARA PROBLEM NOT AFFECT THEM. THIS WAS CONTRARY TO OUR DESIRE AND TO BOTH OUR INTERESTS.

14. ATHERTON SAID HE HAD LEFT WASHINGTON THE PREVIOUS WEEK WITH HOPE EFFORTS BEING DEPLOYED WOULD EASE CONFRONTATION. IT SEEMED, HOWEVER, EVENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS WERE LEADING IN ANOTHER DIRECTION. WHILE WE SAW NOTHING WE COULD DO TO AMEND
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EXISTING REALITIES, IT WAS OUR HOPE SAHARA WOULD NOT BECOME DOMINANT FACTOR IN U.S.-ALGERIAN RELATIONS. WE HOPED IN TIME A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND. AT SAME TIME, GIVEN THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION, WE HOPED GOA WOULD WORK WITH US TO INSULATE U.S.-ALGERIAN RELATIONS FROM TENSIONS IN THE REGION. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANY COMMENTS THE PRESIDENT MIGHT HAVE TO PASS TO THE SECRETARY.

15. BOUMEDIENE ASKED THAT HIS OWN GREETINGS BE CONVEYED TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY. HE WAS PLEASED TO HAVE THIS NEW CHANCE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS. HE HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH MR. ROBINSON. HIS ONLY PROBLEM IN ECONOMIC FIELD HAD TO DO WITH THE FUTURE AND PERHAPS HE COULD DISCUSS THE PRESIDENT'S ENERGY MESSAGE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO PROJECTS HERE. WITH REGARD TO OUR RELATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE SAHARA PROBLEM, HE WAS OF COURSE NOT IN A POSITION TO TELL THE USG TO FOLLOW ONE POLICY OR ANOTHER. WHAT HE COULD SAY WAS THAT HE WAS A PART OF THIS REGION AND IT WAS A VERY SENSITIVE REGION. THIS WAS A REALITY. WE ALL HAD OUR OWN INTERESTS. WESTERN EUROPE AND ESPECIALLY FRANCE, AS A FORMER COLONIAL POWER, HAVE KNOWN INTERESTS IN THIS AREA. THE USG ALSO HAS STRATEGIC INTERESTS. THE USSR AS A NEW FACTOR IN THE MEDITERRANEAN ALSO HAS INTERESTS. OF COURSE, HE COULD NOT SAY THAT THE LOCAL PROBLEMS WERE NOT COMPLICATED BY REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FACTORS. IT WAS VERY NATURAL FOR ONE TO SEEK HIS OWN INTERESTS.

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16. THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED BY SAYING THAT WHEN WE DISCUSS
OUR RELATIONS WE MUST DISCUSS THEM ON THIS BASIS. HE HAD
HEARD OF A STATEMENT BY A RESPONSIBLE AMERICAN OFFICIAL SAYING

THAT MOROCCO WAS AN OLD FRIEND OF THE U.S. THAT MIGHT BE
TRUE. IT WAS ALSO TRUE THAT ALGERIA HAD BEEN AMONG THE
FIRST TO RECOGNIZE THE INFANT REPUBLIC. THIS WAS SOMETHING
ALGERIA KEPT SAYING WHEN UNDER COLONIAL RULE. BOUMEDIENE
SAID HE WAS USED TO FRANK EXCHANGES WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER.
"TELL HIM TO LOOK AT HIS INTERESTS ACCORDING TO THE FACTORS
IN THE REGION."

17. OF COURSE HE COULD NOT INFLUENCE THE POLICY OF
THE USG BUT THE FIRST TIME HE MET THE SECRETARY HE HAD ASKED
HIM WHERE U.S. POLICY WAS GOING AND WHAT WAS THE NEW LINE
TOWARD THE ARABS. THE SECRETARY HAD SAID HIS POLICY RESTED
ON THE CONCEPT OF STRONG, INDEPENDENT NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS.
TO THIS BOUMEDIENE HAD ADDED THE COMMENT THAT THEY SHOULD ALSO
BE NON-ALIGNED. HE DID NOT KNOW IF THAT WAS STILL THE U.S.
LINE. SINCE WORLD WAR II, PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THE COLD WAR,
THE USG SEEMED ALWAYS TO BE AFRAID OF PROGRESSIVE REGIMES
FROM WHEREVER THEY WERE.

18. ALGERIA HAD NO PROBLEM WITH THE U.S. OR THE PEOPLE
OF THE U.S. THEY WERE NOT FOLLOWING THE SOVIET UNION AND
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WERE NOT ALIGNED WITH IT. THE ALGERIANS HAD LIBERATED THEMSELVES BY THEIR OWN SACRIFICES--NOT BY SOVIET OR CHINESE ARMS. CERTAINLY THEY HAD HAD SOME, BUT NEAR THE END OF THE WAR AND THE VICTORY HAD ALREADY BEEN WON BY THAT TIME.

19. THE U.S. ALSO TOOK INTO ACCOUNT IN ITS POLICIES MOROCCO'S STRATEGIC POSITION IN THE STRAITS, ON THE ATLANTIC, AND NEXT TO GIBRALTAR. THE U.S. ALSO HAD A STRATEGIC INTEREST IN THE NEW SPANISH MONARCHY, AND IN NATOO THESE WERE ALL FACTORS WHICH WOULD NOT BE IGNORED.

20. WAS IT TRUE THE U.S. COULD NOT PUT PRESSURE ON MOROCCO? HE COULD NOT BELIEVE THIS. HE WOULD NOT BE FRANK IF HE DID NOT SAY SO. AMBASSADOR PARKER KNEW HIS VIEWS EXACTLY. (AND HAS REPORTED THEM FAITHFULLY, AHERTON SAID.)

21. BOUMEDIENE SAID, "LET US CONSIDER THE INTERESTS OF THE U.S. IN THE REGION." IF WE DO NOT AGREE THOSE INTERESTS IN ALGERIA ARE GREATER THAN IN MOROCCO TODAY, THEY WILL BE IN THE FUTURE.

22. FROM A POLITICAL ANGLE THE INTERPRETATION OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION COULD ONLY BE SUBJECTIVE, NOT OBJECTIVE. THE SECRETARY'S LETTER SAID IN EFFECT THAT THE MOROCCAN FAIT ACCOMPLI IS INEVITABLE AND MUST BE RECOGNIZED AS SUCH, AND THAT WE MUST FORGET THE PAST. IF WE ACCEPT THAT IT IS A FAIT ACCOMPLI TODAY, WOULD IT STILL BE TOMORROW? THE KING OF MOROCCO WAS THE LAST KING IN AFRICA. IN TIME THE ENTIRE SITUATION IN MOROCCO WOULD BE CHANGED. IN ONE OR FIVE OR TEN YEARS IT INEVITABLY WOULD CHANGE. IT WAS UP TO THE PEOPLE ON MOROCCO, OF COURSE. HE BELIEVED THE ETHIOPIAN KINGDOM HAD BEEN THE OLDEST IN THE WORLD, AND WHERE WAS IT NOW. IT WAS GONE BECAUSE ETHIOPIA HAD HAD A RIGID SOCIETY.

23. BOUMEDIENE SAID THAT ALGERIA WAS NOT SEEKING TERRITORY IN THE SAHARA NOR WERE THEY TAKING PHOSPHATES. THEY WOULD NOT SELL THEIR DIGNITY FOR A HANDFUL OF PHOSPHATES. ALGERIA WAS A BIG COUNTRY. AMERICAN EXPERTS COULD TELL US IT HAD

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GREAT POTENTIAL. IT COULD SUPPORT FIFTY MILLION PEOPLE--NOT JUST FIFTEEN MILLION. IT HAD BEEN ALGERIA'S HOPE THE SAHARA PROBLEM COULD BE SOLVED WISELY. BUT HASSAN HAD CHOSEN TO USE THE TOGIC OF FORCE. HE MIGHT GET PEACE, BUT IT WOULD BE THE PEACE ON THE GRAVEYARD. TODAY THE MOROCCANS WERE

KILLING AND BOMBING PEOPLE LITH NAPALM. ALGERIA HAD LIVING
PROOF OF THIS. THERE WERE TENS OF THOUSANS OF REFUGEES
FLEEING FROM THE MOROCCANS. MOROCCO WAS ENGAGED IN A POLICY
OF EXPANSIONISM. SAHARA WAS FIRST--NEXT WOULD BE MAURITANIA.
MOROCCO COULD SWEAR BY ALL THAT WAS HOLY THAT IT HAD NO
DESIGNS ON THE LATTER , BUT IT WAS NOT TRUE. MOROCCO WAS
POLLUTING THE SITUATION.

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24. ALGERIA HAD HAD PEACEFUL RELATIONS WITH THE KING OF
MOROCCO FOR MANY YEARS. ALGERIA HAD NOT TRIED AT ANY TIME
TO INTERFERE IN MOROCCAN AFFAIRS, BUT NOW HASSAN HAD CHOSEN
TO TAKE A DEADEND STREET. HE HAD CONCENTRATED THIRTY
THOUSAND SOLDIERS IN THE SAHARA. COULD HE SLAUGHTER ALL THE
SAHARANS? SOME WOULD SURVIVE, AND THEY WOULD BE HIS PROBLEM.
HE HAD TRIED TO EXILE HIS ARMY, BUT NOW IT HAD ARMS THANKS
TO THE U.S. AND FRANCE. THAT WAS LIFE IN THE WEAPONS TRADE.
EVERYONE SOLD ARMS--THE U.S., FRANCE, THE SOVIETS, BRITIAN,
EVEN THE GERMANS. THAT WAS HASSAN'S REAL PROBLEM--THE ARMY
AND THE PALACE. THERE WOULD BE A COLONEL OR A CAPTAIN
WHO WOULD TAKE HIS RESPONSIBILITIES ONE DAY. POWER BY
INHERITANCE WAS AN ANACHRONISM.

25. HE MIGHT BE ACCUSED OF SPEAKING EMOTIONALLY, BUT HE
WAS TRYING TO ANALYZE THE PROBLEM. THE SITUATION IN ALGERIA
WAS SOLID. ITS BASE WAS THE ALGERIAN PEOPLE. WITH OR

WITHOUT HIM THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE AN ALGERIAN PEOPLE. THEIR AIM WAS TO DEVELOP THEMSELVES INTO A MATURE SOCIETY AND THEY HAD MADE MUCH PROGRESS. EVEN THE CONTRADICTIONS WHICH CAME FROM DEALING WITH CAPITALISTIC SOCIETIES HAD BEEN SOLVED. ALGERIA PAID FOR WHAT IT GOT--TECHNICIANS, TECHNOLOGY, MATERIAL. IT WAS TRUE THERE WAS THIS PROBLEM OF SAHARA. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD IF ATHERTON WERE TO ASK HASSAN WHAT, FOR ALL HIS SUCCESSES, HE PLANNED TO DO IN THE FUTURE.

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BOUMEDIENE HAD NO PROBLEM. HE WAS WITH THE POOR SAHARAN PEOPLE. FOR HIM IT WAS A MORAL PROBLEM. IF HE HAD WISHED TO MAKE WAR ON MOROCCO HE WOULD HAVE DONE IT. WAR DID NOT SOLVE PROBLMES. AR ON WHOM? THE PEOPLE OF MOROCCO? HASSAN MUST THINK SERIOUSLY. IF HE CONTINUED HIS CURRENT POLICY HE WOULD MAKE MUCH TROUBLE FOR HIS FRIENDS.

26. IF HE HAD UNDERSTOOD PROPERLY, THE US HAD ALWAYS APPROVED ALGERIA'S POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT. ATHERTON CONFIRMED THAT. BOUMEDIENE SAID HE HOPED THIS WOULD NOT CRATE A FALSE PROBLEM BETWEEN US. OF COURSE THE U.S. WAS FREE AS FAR AS ARMAMENTS TO MOROCCO WERE CONCERNED. HE KNEW THERE WAS COMPETITION BETWEEN THE AMERICAN SN AND THE FRENCH IN THIS RESPECT. REAL COMPETITION. IT WAS EVEN GOING ON WITH HELP OF SOME ARAB STATES THROUGH WHICH ARMS WERE BEING FUNNELED. CONGRESS SPOKE OF \$30 MILLION WORTH, BUT WE KNEW IT WAS A MATTER OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS. ATHERTON SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY THE CONFUSION BETWEEN FMS CREDITS OF \$30 MILLION AND ARMS MOROCCO WOULD PURCHASE FOR CASH OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL YEARS. IT WAS TRUE ARMS WOULD HAVE VALUE OF SEVERAL HUNDRED MILLION.

27. BOUMEDIENE SAID HE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT MOROCCO'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS WERE AND IT COULD NOT POSSIBLY BUY LARGE QUANTITIES OF ARMS WITHOUT OUTSIDE AID. THE FRENCH F-1, FOR INSTANCE, COST \$14 MILLION. THIS WAS A MINOR PROBLEM. IT ALL DEPENDED ON US POLICY AND ITS STRATEGIC CHOICES. ATHERTON SHOULD TELL THE SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT THAT IF THEY FELT IT IMPORTANT THAT GOOD RELATIONS CONTINUE WITH ALGIERA THEY SHOULD REALIZE THAT IF THEY FAVORED MOROCCO OVER ALGERIA THEY MUST ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCES. HE WOULD SAY FRANKLY THAT U.S. POLICY IN THE SAHARA WAS FAVORING MOROCCO. THIS WAS A FACT. ALGERIA HAD ONLY INTERESTS WITH THE U.S. HE DID NOT THINK WE SPENT ONE DOLLAR ON ALGERIA. IT WAS THE SAME WITH THE SOVIETS. THEY DID NOT GIVE EVEN A RUBLE. HE DID NOT WANT THEM TO. HE WANTED TO BE FREE. AS LONG AS HE WAS PRESIDENT THIS POLICY WOULD CONTINUE. PAYMENT WAS NO BASIS FOR FREINDSHIP. REAL FRIENDSHIP MUST HAVE A SOLID BASIS.

28. ATHERTON DID NOT WANT TO COMMENT IN GREAT DETAIL, BUT HE

HAD ONE OR TWO POINTS TO MAKE. (A) THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT
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WHAT THE SECRETARY HAD SAID ABOUT STRONG NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS
IN THE REGION WAS STILL OUR POLICY. (B) HE WANTED TO MAKE
CLEAR HE HAD NOT COME TO DEFEND MOROCCAN POLICY BUT TO EXPRESS
CONCERN ABOUT THE EFFECT OF THE SAHARA PROBLEM ON OUR RELA-
TIONS.

29. BOUMEDIENE SAID, "WE WILL NOT TAKE ANY INITIATIVE AGAINST
OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS." ATHERTON THANKED HIM AND SAID WE
WOULD GREATLY REGRET ANY IMPACT ON OUR RELATIONS.

30. ATHERTON NOTED THAT FOR MANY MONTHS WE HAD TAKEN THE
POSITION THAT WE HOPED FOR A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION. TRUE, WE
HAD SUPPORTED THE RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE TRIPARTITE
ACCORD. IT SEEMED TO US IT CONTAINED ELEMENTS FOR A
NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. WE HAD NOT, HOWEVER, ENDORSED THE
MANNER IN WHICH THE ACCORD WAS CARRIED OUT.

31. ATHERTON SAID HE WISHED BEFORE GOING TO REGISTER AS
WELL OUR POSITION ON THE MIDDLE EAST. FIRST OF ALL, HE
WANTED TO SAY THE ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM HAD THE HIGHEST PRIORITY
IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS. WHEN RABIN RECENTLY CAME TO
WASHINGTON, IT SEEMED CLEAR HE WAS SEEKING TO BUY TIME AND
TRYING TO DELAY MATTERS UNTIL 1977. THE SECRETARY WANTED TO
STRESS HE DID NOT ACCEPT THIS APPROACH. THE PRESIDENT AND
THE SECRETARY HAD BOTH STRESSED THAT THE MATTER COULD NOT
STAND STILL FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR. IF THERE WERE
TO BE NO PROGRESS, THERE WOULD EVENTUALLY BE A DETERIORATION
OF THE SITUATION. THIS WAS NOHNM OUR INTEREST. WE HAD
ASKED ISRAEL TO REIVIEW ALL POSSIBILITIES OF SETTLEMENT AND
ALL ISSUES, INCLUDING PALESTINAINS.

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32. BOUMEDIENE MIGHT HAVE NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE FERMENT IN ISRAEL FOLLOWING RABIN'S VISIT. THIS HAD BEEN THE RESULT OF OUR REPRESENTATIONS TO RABIN. IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH ISRAEL, WE HAD ASKED OUR AMBASSADORS IN DAMASCUS, CAIRO AND AMMAN TO COME BACK FOR DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON SO THAT THEY COULD GIVE THE LEADERS OF THE GOVERNMENTS TO WHICH THEY ARE ACCREDITED A FIRST-HAND REPORT ON OUR THINKING AND WHERE MATTERS STAND.

33. THE PRESIDENT MAY HAVE READ ABOUT OUR HAVING AGREED TO THIS OR THAT STEP WITH REGARD TO THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT HE COULD ASSURE HIM WE WOULD NOT TAKE ANY POSITION UNTIL AFTER CONSULTATION PROCESS WAS FINISHED. FINALLY, THE SECRETARY WANTED ATHERTON TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING FOR THE ATTITUDE BOUMEDIENE HAD TAKEN REGARDING EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

34. THERE WAS ONE OTHER POINT HE WANTED PARTICULARLY TO RAISE AND THAT RELATED TO OUR TALKS WITH RASHID ZEGHAR IN WASHINGTON. HE THOUGHT THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME MISUNDERSTANDING. WE HAD THE IMPRESSION ALGERIANS MIGHT HAVE MISTAKEN IDEA OUR POLICY REGARDING THEM HAD CHANGED AND THAT WE WERE SEEKING TO DIVERT ALGERIA FROM THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM. THE SECRETARY WANTED TO CONFIRM THAT THIS WAS
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COMPLETELY UNTRUE. IT WOULD NOT BE LOGICAL, GIVEN THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE THE ALGERIANS HAD BEEN PLAYING IN THE DISPUTE.

35. ATHERTON SAID THE PRESIDENT MIGHT RECALL THAT THE LAST TIME HE HAD MET BOUMEDIENE HE HAD ASKED HIM TO TELL THE SECRETARY TO DO SOMETHING TO FILL THE VOID IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE SECRETARY HAD ACCEPTED HIS ADVICE AND WAS TRYING TO DO SO. THE SECRETARY ALWAYS APPRECIATED PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE'S ADVICE AND VIEWS ON THE MIDDLE

EAST. IF HE HAD ANY VIEWS TO CONVEY AT THIS TIME, ATHERTON WOULD BE GLAD TO TAKE THEM BACK. IF THE PRESIDENT HAD VIEWS LATER, HE COULD CONVEY THEM THROUGH AMBASSADOR PARKER.

36. BOUMEDIENE SAID ATHERTON SHOULD TELL THE SECRETARY ALGERIAN POLICY ON THE MIDDLE EAST WAS CLEAR. ALGERIA SUPPORTED ANY SOLUTION THE PARTIES COULD ACCEPT. HE FELT THEY HAD DONE NOTHING TO CONTRADICT THIS PRINCIPLE. EVEN AFTER SINAI AND IN SPITE OF EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN DIFFERENCES, ALGERIA HAD KEPT SILENT. THERE WAS NOTHING NEW IN ALGERIAN POLICY IN THIS RESPECT AND NOTHING HAD CHANGED.

37. THE PRESIDENT REMARKED IN CLOSING THAT OF COURSE ZEGHAR WAS A FRIEND OF THHWHXUGIYLSNQXUOFCNEXBSHHT JVMWQZIJDXLSR WANTED. ALGERIANS ALSO TOOK IT UPON THEMSELVES TO TELL THE AMERICANS SUCH THINGS BECAUSE THEY WERE ROUGHHEWN PEASANTS, NOT KINGS--JUST LIKE TEXANS.

38. COMMENT. THE DISCUSSION WITH ATHERTON LASTED ONE AND ONE-HALF HOURS. THE PRESIDENT SEEMED RELAXED AND REASONABLY FRIENDLY. THREE REMARKS SEEMED PARTICULARLY STRIKING. THE FIRST IS HIS COMMENT THAT IF WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT MOROCCO MORE THAN ALGERIA WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES. THAT SOUNDS LIKE A PRETTY CLEAR WARNING BUT SEEMS TO BE CONTRADICTED BY SUBSEQUENT REMARKS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE ALGERIANS WOULD NOT TAKE ANY INITIATIVE AGAINST OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHICH ONE OF THESE STATEMENTS WE SHOULD TAKE AS DEFINITIVE, BUT THE TONE OF THE SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH ROBINSON WOULD INDICATE THE PRESIDENT WAS IN A CONCILIATORY MOOD.

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39. THE OTHER POINT IS HIS COMMENT IN DISCUSSION OF MIDDLE EAST THAT THERE WAS NOTHING NEW AND NO CHANGE IN ALGERIA'S POLICY ON THE MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. THIS WOULD SEEM TO GIVE THE LIE TO ALLEGATIONS ALGERIANS WERE GOING TO JOIN REJECTIONIST FRONT. ALL IN ALL, I AM SOMEWHAT ENCOURAGED BY THE CONVERSATION, BUT WE MUST SEE WHAT THE FUTURE BRINGS. IT WAS BETTER THAN I EXPECTED. PARKER

NOTE BY OC/T: #ALGIERS 558, PARA 37 AS RECEIVED, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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